COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

VIRGINIA ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF COMMUNITY BROADBAND TOOLKIT
~ *Web-based Resource a Product of the Broadband Roundtable~*

RICHMOND – Secretary of Technology Aneesh Chopra announces the launch of Virginia's Community Broadband Toolkit, a web-based resource to assist localities in attracting broadband service providers, especially in the more remote communities where coverage gaps remain.

The toolkit is a product of the Broadband Roundtable led by Former Governor Mark Warner and Secretary Chopra who were charged by Governor Kaine to support his goal of providing universal access to broadband services for all Virginia businesses by 2010.

"The toolkit provides a single location for local and regional officials to find the information needed to initiate a successful community-led broadband deployment," said Governor Kaine. "This simplifies the process, speeds up the transaction time, and helps eliminate barriers created by a lack of technical knowledge and staff."

The toolkit provides an easy-to-use guide to facilitate local decision-making including information on technologies, applications and business elements such as legal structure and financing. An online calculator is designed to help community leaders identify and leverage existing sources of funding.

"Access to affordable broadband services is critical if we are to remain globally competitive," said former Governor Mark Warner. "Despite record public investments in our rural infrastructure, we must look for smart and creative ways to tackle the 'last-mile' challenge."

The launch of the toolkit marks the culmination of the activities of the Commonwealth's Broadband Roundtable, a broad stakeholder group including nationally regarded experts assembled in 2007 to analyze broadband availability in the Commonwealth and offer solutions for bridging remaining gaps.

"Our year-long journey across all corners of the Commonwealth made clear we have a hunger for broadband access but no easy path to deliver it," said Secretary Chopra.

"Thanks to our group of committed Roundtable members, we've captured the best learning and have established a foundation that will improve with time."

The toolkit is available under the Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance homepage and will also be available as a link from many agency and organization websites.

To visit the toolkit, please go to www.otpba.vi.virginia.gov

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